

Foundation of Faith

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THIS JESUS!

BITTER BLESSINGS

RELATIONSHIP KILLER

MAKE USE OF YOUR VACATION

God–The Son

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FOUNDATION OF FAITH

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Editorial

Dear Reader!

In the first century A.D., the apostle John saw great trouble in this world. Therefore, he wrote: “We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one” (1 John 5:19).

This disciple of the Lord knew that all authority in heaven and on earth had been given to his Savior. But during the years of his faithful service, he also experienced the fact that unbelieving and godless people are under the influence and power of Satan.

Paul, too, confirms to the Ephesians that people in sin and trespass are spiritually dead, do not have a true faith, and are guided and led as sons of disobedience of the prince of this world, who is Satan (please read Ephesians 2:1-3). The worst part is that they usually do not recognize this. Because they neither read God’s Word nor see the truth, they do not find the right answer for the thousand questions troubling them.

My dear reader, I see Pilate’s question as one of the most important for us all: “What then shall I do with Jesus, Who is called Christ?” (Matthew 27:22). Yes, the spirits part at Christ, for there is only one “either—or!” Either grace, salvation, peace, joy, and eternal life!—Or: hate, quarrel, strife, godlessness, and eternal damnation, torment, and agony!

Through God’s great mercy, I chose, sought, and found Jesus. I sing and testify with the songwriter Fritz Woike:

*You made my whole life so rich and so sweet,
You stilled my longing and made me complete;
And all my sins they were covered, it’s true,
When I found peace for my heart in You.*

*You are my fortress in storm and in stress,
You are my fount in the harsh wilderness;
You are the Savior Who gives life and breath,
You are my life even after death.*

*You are my Guide, leading me by the hand,
You show the way when I don’t understand;
You are my leader, whatever betide,
Lord, let me always stay at Your side.*

H. D. Nimz



GOD THE SON

The Name Above All Names

*One Name above all other names,
Oh, there is no other the same!
A Name full of blessed life,
Name full of peace and might: Jesus!
The Redeemer taking sin's place,
Reflector of the Father's grace,
The Way and Door to life eternal,
My salvation is supernal:
Jesus, Jesus, Jesus!*

“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

There once was a dignified statesman from Saxony who became very ill. He had the local pastor notified and requested a visitation. When the pastor came, he said to him, “I am ill and am afraid that I might die. Therefore, I ask that you would tell me something edifying. But let me mention one thing: do not tell me anything about Jesus, for I want to hear nothing of Him.”

The pastor answered very calmly, “I am happy you clarified that right from the beginning, since that is precisely what I would have started with. Nonetheless, there

are many further uplifting things we can discuss. May I talk to you about God?”

“Oh, certainly, you may tell me about God. I have always had a high regard for Him since my youth.” The pastor proceeded to talk about God’s love to mankind, which was so pleasing to the sick man that as the pastor was leaving, he requested another visit in the near future.

Upon the pastor’s return, the sick man asked him, “So what good things are you going to tell me today? I have been anxiously awaiting your visit.” The pastor talked about God’s omnipotence and wisdom. This pleased the man once again. The next time, the pastor talked about God’s omniscience. This was a little more serious but still pleasing to the sick man. During the fourth visit, the pastor spoke about God’s holiness and what a pure and holy nature God has.

The subject of the fifth conversation was God’s righteousness. At this point, the sick man stated, “Pastor, I cannot stand it any longer! I am scared and afraid. If God is so holy and righteous as you maintain, then I am a lost man!”

The pastor now chose to leave and did not return the following day. Soon, however, the patient had the pas-

tor summoned and uttered, “I cannot stand it anymore! Please tell me something comforting again. I feel as though I am already in hell or hell is inside of me. Can’t you tell me anything that will calm me again?”

The pastor answered, “I don’t think that I can tell you anything else other than that even though God is gracious, He is also all-knowing, holy, and righteous, and therefore must punish the wicked. Of course, I could tell you much more about nice and wonderful things, but you have chosen not to hear about them. Therefore, you must die in your unfortunate state and await your fate on the other side, for which I feel most sorry for you.”

“Oh,” moaned the patient, “can’t you give me any comfort? Tell me! Can I still be saved?”—“Oh yes, but only if I

may mention the name of the One Whom you don’t want to hear about.”—“So tell me whatever you want, as long as I can just be saved from this damnation!”

Finally, the pastor was able to proclaim with power the Good News to the sick man, that this Jesus, Who had been so despised by him until now, wanted to be His Creator and Savior and that he could turn to Him with all his sins and beg for His mercy. Jesus bled and died on the cross to redeem him as well as the whole world.

Now the sick man was glad to hear of this Jesus who accepts poor sinners. In Him he now sought refuge and learned that Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and in no other Name given among men can anyone find salvation. As a forgiven man, he could now believe in Jesus and die as a happy and confident child of God.

Are You Jesus?

A few years ago, some businessmen went to a conference in Chicago. They had promised their wives that they would be back on Friday for supper. Before the flight home, and in his haste to get out his boarding pass, one of the men knocked over a display stand of apples with his briefcase. The apples flew in all directions. Without stopping or even looking over their shoulders, all the men arrived on time at their airplane. *All except one!*

He stopped, breathed deeply, and feeling sorry for the young girl whose stand had toppled over, he called after his friends to fly without him and asked one of the businessmen to tell his wife that he would take a later flight. Then he returned to the area where the apples were strewn around.

He was happy he had made this choice. The 16 year old girl was totally blind. She cried quietly as she felt around on the floor for the fruit strewn about. The mass of people went by, but no one appeared concerned about her situation.

The businessman knelt down on the floor, picked up the apples, and helped place them on the stand once again. While doing this, he noticed that a few now had bruises. Those he put into another basket. After he had finished, he took out his wallet and said to the girl, “Here is \$40 for the damage we did. Is that enough?” With tears in her eyes, the girl nodded her head. The

man continued and said, “I hope we have not ruined your day for you.”

As he was just about to depart, the amazed girl called after him, “Sir!” He stopped and looked into her blind eyes as she asked, “Are you Jesus?”

In a contemplative manner, the man slowly walked away to catch his flight, but with the burning question in his soul, “Are you Jesus?”

Do people confuse you with Jesus? Do they confuse Christians with Jesus? Should that not be our goal to become so much like Him that those people who are blind to His love, His life, and His mercy, see His likeness in our lives? If we say we are like Him, should we not live and act as He would?

To know Him means more than to utter Bible verses and go to church. It actually means to live out His words every day. You are the apple of His eye, and just like the scattered apples, we were personally bruised by sin. But Jesus stopped, picked us up, and on the hill of Golgotha, He paid the full price for our spoiled fruit. Let us live worthy of this praise!

Jesus says in Matthew 5:14–16, “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lamp stand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Noteworthy Truths About Jesus

Knowing something about Jesus and believing it, definitely does not make a person a Christian. To become a true Christian, we need to confess our sins and accept Him as our personal Savior and Redeemer. Yet, let us contemplate more about Him and thereby increase our knowledge.

“What do you think about the Christ?” (Matthew 22:42) is the great question the Lord asks us to consider and answer. The reason this question is of such importance is that Christianity is not a book of laws or a moral system, nor a system of religious beliefs, rather, it is founded on one person, Jesus Christ. Should our concept of Christ be unclear, it would be difficult to grasp the clarity of biblical teachings.

Jesus is not merely one of the Great Ones on earth. He stands alone and exalted beyond every earthly measure. He taught as what no other has taught. He lived as no other has ever lived. He died as no other has ever died. Never has mankind had a Savior such as Him. His character was undefiled, His teachings without a flaw, and His life without a mistake. He was a perfect person, indeed even more: He was God in the flesh. He is the Word, everlasting Life, and the Light of the world. There have been many great men in this world, but Jesus is greater than all of them. Christ stands beyond all human measure.

Christ is God. But He became man in order to accomplish the work of salvation. He is “God . . . manifested

in the flesh” (1 Timothy 3:16). Throughout the centuries, there have been many controversies and discussions regarding this doctrine of the Bible. Is He really God? Was He man? Was He both man and God? Yes, He was God humbled and exalted man—God and man.

He was born of a virgin. Isaiah had prophesied, “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14). Thus, Mary became His mother and God His Father; Christ became the link between God and man.

In the Bible, we find Jesus referred to in ways which make clear reference to His divinity. “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last” (Revelation 22:13). He is often referred to as God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, and other similar names.

Every characteristic God the Father possesses is also held by God the Son.

Jesus is omnipotent: “who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power” (Hebrews 1:3).

He is omniscient: “in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Colossians 2:3).

He is everlasting: “before Abraham was, I AM” (John 8:58).

He is unchanging: “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8).



He is omnipresent: “I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20).

We can rightly summarize these characteristics together with the scripture we read in Colossians 2:9: “For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”

Furthermore, there are things only God can do, which are also reported of Jesus, again proving He is God. The Bible credits the following to Him:

Creation (John 1:2–3)

Upholding (Hebrews 1:3)

Forgiveness of sins (Mark 2:5–10)

All judgment (John 5:22)

Giving eternal life (John 10:28)

All prophecies have been fulfilled in Christ. All shadows of the Mosaic Law have been fulfilled by Him. All His works and miracles could not have been performed by anyone else. There is only one explanation for His unmatched life and His unique character—He is God! He was without sin; He was absolutely perfect and holy. Where did Jesus have such knowledge, holiness, and authority from? How did He become the Savior?

“You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve” was the godly command (Matthew 4:10). Jesus allowed Himself to be worshiped. In fact, God said, “Let all the angels of God worship Him” (Hebrews 1:6).

Nevertheless, all this is overshadowed by His death and resurrection. There is no deception and deceit to be found, for this great event did not take place in secret. He was not playing dead. His body did not decay into dust and ashes. No, Christ died, arose from the dead, then left His grave and went back to His Father in Heaven.

The death of Christ is one of the most magnificent and uplifting facts of the entire Gospel. We are not saved by His example, nor His marvelous words; not even through His obedience, but only through His death on the cross. “We were reconciled to God through the death of His Son” (Romans 5:10). Christ died for our sins so that we would be reconciled and therefore need not die in our sin.

Jesus was wounded for my transgressions; He was bruised for my iniquities. The chastisement was upon Him, that I may have peace, and by His stripes I am healed. Dear sinner, do you not want to yield yourself to Him? Dear brother and sister, do you have the desire to love Him and serve Him even more than before?

This is my wonderful Savior, a Savior where divinity and humanity meet, and a Savior Who lives, even though He died! He is definitely the Savior and Redeemer of the entire world. “Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them” (Hebrews 7:25).
E. Martin



GOD THE SON

Who Was Jesus?

Jesus is the focal point of heaven and earth. He is the One whom the angels adore; they fall down before Him, and thousands upon thousands stand ready to serve Him. Heaven resounds with His praises, and throughout eternity, the redeemed sing the song of the Lamb. From east and west, from far and near, innumerable multitudes, for whom Jesus has become the center and essence of life, will come and praise Him.

Jesus has the greatest power on earth, and at the same time endures the greatest scorn, derision, and shame. Even today, many scorn Him and want nothing to do with this “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus is most important and beloved on the one hand, and also most despised and ridiculed on the other. Nevertheless, He stands above all, untouched by the wildest waves around Him. To His followers, He remains a solid rock, an everlasting foundation. All knees in heaven and on earth will bow before Him one day.

Who was Jesus? Every Christian knows the importance of this vital question. Jesus is the Author of our salvation, the central figure in God’s plan of salvation. Salvation is only possible through the Person of Jesus Christ. This is the essence of Christianity. This makes Christianity different and distinct from all other religions. The character of any other religion is dependent on the teaching of its founder, not on the character of that founder, or upon who the founder was. But who was

Jesus? It is not foremost His teaching but who He is that defines Christianity. The answer to this question is the essence of Christianity. Who was He?

He was truly human.

The disciples and those living at the time knew Jesus as a man, fully human. He was born of the virgin Mary, a descendant of King David. He had all the needs and characteristics common to all other human beings. He grew tired, was hungry and thirsty, experienced joy and sadness, and shed tears. He loved His disciples and enjoyed spending time with them. At the end of His life, He died and was laid in a tomb. He not only possessed a human body but also a human spirit. We know this because the devil tempted Him, seeking to stir pride in Him. Though He was truly human, He was without sin.

He was truly God.

Besides having a human nature, Jesus also had the nature of God. He is the true God. The divine characteristics of Jesus are clearly shown in the Bible. He is the eternal Word through which all things were created (Colossians 1:16-17). The creation of the visible and invisible world is so indescribably awesome precisely because it is the work of an eternal, uncreated being.

The creation being ascribed to Jesus verifies His deity. We see in Him the unlimited power and eternal charac-

teristics of God. As Creator, there is nothing in heaven or earth that existed before Him, thus He must be God, Who created all things for Himself.

All creation is time-oriented. Yet that which was before creation is not part of what was created. What existed before creation is the eternal, uncreated God. The text in Hebrews 10 confirms that Jesus is the one true God, yet He is not the Father. How this is possible can only be explained by the doctrine of the Trinity.

Jesus Himself said, “Before Abraham was, I AM” (John 8:58). Those who deny the deity of Christ and believe in the pre-existence of all souls try to interpret these words to mean, “Before Abraham was, I existed.” But that is not what Jesus said, because He said, “I AM.” Jesus is eternal.

Furthermore, the judgment of the world has been given to Him (2 Corinthians 5:10, Matthew 25:31-46, John 5:22). Such judgment is only possible if the judge has full knowledge of the human heart and its moral responsibility. Only God is the ultimate Judge, and because this function has been given to Jesus, He must be God.

Another one of His godly characteristics is His power to do miracles. Through them, He proved His deity while

He was on earth. He is also all-knowing. His disciples knew this and testified about it (John 16:30, John 21:17). Jesus also demonstrated His divinity by forgiving sins, something that only God can do (Luke 5:20-24). The Bible condemns worshiping anything besides God. That is idolatry. Yet Jesus was worshiped, and He accepted worship because He is God. His disciples worshiped Him because they realized He was divine (Matthew 14:33, John 9:38). These biblical texts are sufficient to prove the deity of Christ.

When Jesus talks about Himself, He never speaks of Himself as two but only as one Person. The unification of the two natures of Christ was necessary for Him to be the Author of our salvation. Otherwise, He would only have lived and died as a mere human. He would have died only as a martyr. He could not have been the sacrificial Lamb that carried the sins of the world. As a human, He could reveal the great rift that had been established between God and humankind. And as God, He could fulfill the plan of salvation. He was the holy Lamb of God “who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God” in order to obtain an “eternal redemption” (Hebrews 9:12-14).

Jesus Christ Is Greater

“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God” (Hebrews 4:14).

The Book of Hebrews shows us that the Lord Jesus is much greater than all who preceded Him and that His atonement is infinitely better than all the sacrifices of the law. His greatness outshines the old order of the law, which was only “a shadow of the good things to come” (Hebrew 10:1).

Every chapter in Hebrews brings this unique topic to the forefront:

- Chapter 1: He is greater than the prophets and angels.
- Chapter 2: He is greater than Adam.
- Chapter 3: He is greater than Moses.
- Chapter 4: He is greater than Joshua.
- Chapter 5: He is greater than Aaron.
- Chapter 6: He is greater than all else.
- Chapter 7: He is greater than the Levitical priesthood.
- Chapter 8: He is greater than Moses—a “mediator of a better covenant.”

- Chapter 9: He is greater than the earthly tabernacle with its atonement sacrifices.
- Chapter 10: He is greater than the offerings of the Old Testament.
- Chapter 11: He is greater than the Heroes of Faith in the Old Testament.
- Chapter 12: He is greater than Abel.
- Chapter 13: He is greater than the atonement offerings and greater than Jerusalem or any earthly religious system.

Christ is greater,

- because He is a divine being.
- because His priesthood is forever.
- because His sacrifice was once for all, which results in eternal salvation.
- because He never fails.
- because even the God-given Law pales in comparison to Him.
- because He is the Great Shepherd.
- because His covenant is eternal.

Christ—

The Only Hope in This World

In this time of social and political turmoil, everyone longs more than ever before for peace. Filled with hope, people look for a political leader who can fulfill all of their wishes. But what disappointment people often face, who have blindly entrusted their future to a single individual. Proven leaders are often removed from their positions, and those who have promised what they cannot deliver, take over. Soon, conditions are worse than before. We don't need to wonder why people are discouraged and despair, and no longer see any hope in this world.

But even today, there is a ray of hope, and for all time: Christ! He is the only hope in this world. This joyful news can transform one's whole life, spiritually, economically, and politically, and it can bring a calm and peace to every individual. Happiness and joy can then enter into every home.

When all earthly and human hope has disappointed, we still have the most precious hope of all: Christ! We have everything in Him! Psalm 40:4 says, "Blessed is that man who makes the Lord his trust." It is so sad that there are still so many people who have not claimed this precious promise for themselves and who have not fully and completely surrendered themselves to the Savior.

Therefore, we need not wonder about the unrest, discontentment, and hopelessness among people. May all of mankind join in with the call of the Psalmist, "My hope is from Him!" (Psalm 62:5). How quickly circumstances would change all across the world! We could rejoice in life and enjoy unhindered peace and happiness. Yes, how quickly all wars and conflict would be banished from this world.

The singer continues in the Old Testament: "For You are my hope, o Lord God; You are my trust from my youth" (Psalm 71:5). May those of our time who speak so much about disappointment, follow the only true path and acknowledge Christ as their only hope. If we observe the great men of the Old Testament, the leaders in grand times, judges, patriarchs, prophets, and kings, they had

all placed their full hope in God. Not a single one of these many were disappointed.

Let us reflect on the woman who suffered twelve years with a flow of blood. She had used all medical resources but without success. She had lost all of her possessions and money doing so. But when she heard about Jesus, a ray of hope shone in her heart. At once, she knew that Jesus alone could free her from her suffering. She had a confidence that could not be shaken. He was her only hope. The Lord helped her wonderfully and rewarded her faith by healing her.

Or let us think of all those with leprosy whom the Lord cleansed. They were all cast out of society. They had nothing left to hope for, but when they heard about Jesus, their hope was rekindled—and they too were cleansed.

Do you know the story of the sinful woman in Luke 7 who placed her hope solely in the Lord Jesus? Was she rejected and disappointed? No! Because of her faith, Jesus crowned her hope and made her a joyful child of God.

Whether poor or rich, of high or low position, big or little, young or old, whether showered with honor or covered in shame, everyone must take the same path to Christ. He offers this same wonderful hope to everyone. He is ready to help all and heal their bodies and souls. Think about how wonderfully God can transform: He makes useful people out of criminals, and out of atheists He makes witnesses of the Gospel and workers in His vineyard.

Oh, may all people accept this wonderful Jesus in their hearts! How soon would this earth, where so much war, conflict, trouble, and misery take place, be transformed into a glorious paradise. What peace pervades through hearts that are filled by Christ! What joy beams from the eyes of children of God! How they endeavor to spread His teachings and adorn them by a quiet and holy walk! How glorious is such a life dedicated to God!

Does not a longing pervade your heart as well to be such a true child of God? Oh yes, all of mankind longs for this. Nevertheless, this longing and hope can be filled

when everyone recognizes and accepts this wonderful Christ as their only hope. He came onto this earth for all people. He fulfilled the wonderful work of redemption on Golgotha for everyone and thereby took upon Himself the sins of all mankind on the cross.

It is sin that makes a person unhappy. Yes, sin is the downfall of humanity. A person who is poisoned by sin only brings bad fruit. Christ came to us in order to save us from the captivity of sin and make us wholly free. Christ is and remains the victor over all power of sin. Where sin

is strong, Christ desires to be stronger. God wants us all to lead a holy and pure life, including you. God favors no one and does not differentiate. All of us may enter His treasure store to take priceless jewels. These sources will never run out. Therefore, do not hesitate, but step up and take hold of them. You will not leave empty-handed. Peace, joy, happiness, and blessedness will be yours forevermore. Then you too will lift your voice and cry out, “Yes, Christ is the only hope and salvation of this world!”

C. W. Naylor

Christ, *the Physician*

Physical healing through prayer is definitely biblical. The prophet Isaiah left us a wonderful prophesy pertaining to Christ. In chapter 53 we read that healing is an important part of God’s work. Later, when Jesus walked on earth and healed those who were sick, this prophesy was fulfilled. In Matthew 8:17 we read, “that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, ‘He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses’” (see Isaiah 53:4).

Frequently we read of Jesus: “He was moved with compassion for them.” There was never a situation in Scripture where He did not listen to one who asked for help. The leper who came to him said, “Lord, if you are willing, You can make me clean” (Matthew 8:2); the blind man cried out saying, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” (Luke 18:38); and the woman who touched the hem of His garment said, “If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well” (Matthew 9:21). All were healed. In Matthew 14:36 we read: “And as many as touched it [the hem of His garment] were made perfectly well.” Likewise, we read in Luke 4:40, “And He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them.”

The great amount of time Jesus dedicated to healing the sick proves how important it was. Since Jesus came to earth as the very image of the Father, and in order to fulfill the Father’s will, we must conclude that physical healing was a part of His earthly mission.

In addition, this certainly reveals God the Father’s willingness to heal. If earthly fathers strive to remove burdens and suffering from their children, how much more so the Heavenly Father! Since we do not read anything in God’s Word to indicate that there is a timeframe

for His will, we must conclude that it is still God’s will to heal the sick today.

In James 5:14–15 we are left with a clear, definite promise for healing. There it says, “Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.” That refers to you too, when you are sick.

God has given His church the gifts of the Spirit. Among these gifts are “gifts of healing” and “the working of miracles” (1 Corinthians 12:9–10).

In relation to the last assignment the Lord gave His disciples, He said certain signs would follow those who believe. In Mark 16:18 we can read the following words: “[T]hey will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.” God did not give us an empty promise; it is still His will to heal the sick today.

We are healed by faith alone. In James 5:15 it says, “And the prayer of faith will save the sick.” Once when two blind men came to Jesus in order to be healed, He asked them, “Do you believe that I am able to do this?” And they replied, “Yes, Lord.” Later we read, “Then He touched their eyes and said, ‘according to your faith let it be done to you’” (Matthew 9:28–29). In another situation, several men carried a paralytic man to Jesus. “When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, ‘Son, be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven you.’” And when the scribes made their critical observations, Jesus said to the sick man, “Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house” (Matthew 9:2–7).

When the disciples were unsuccessful in casting out an evil spirit from a young boy and they asked for the reason, He answered them, “Because you have so little faith” (Matthew 17:20). And in His hometown of Nazareth, Jesus did not perform many wonders because of their unbelief (Matthew 13:58). Faith is the main requirement for healing. God wants to heal us. We must believe without any doubt that God will heal us.

Healing of the body is a temporary rescue from death. Every person is destined to die and only after the coming resurrection will death's effects be overcome forever. The healing of the body is just a taste of this mighty power of resurrection which will destroy death.

It is certainly God's will that we follow healthy eating habits. We often see people who destroy their health through unhealthy lifestyles. God's children should learn

to live long with healthy bodies. They should choose to maintain a healthy diet and simple lifestyle.

God, however, is Lord over life and death. Often when a young person dies, people ask, “Why?” But often we won't find out until eternity, why God allowed certain things to happen.

But, nonetheless, we have the opportunity to pray the prayer of faith from James 5:14-15. We can call the elders of the church and fulfill the requirements that are written here. If you can't reach an elder, then claim the promise that we find in Mark 11:23-24. At the end of this passage we read, “Whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.” Healing of the body is part of our salvation through Christ.

R. L. Berry

My Ideal

If you were to ask me, “What is your ideal?” I would answer, “My ideal is Jesus.” A non-believer might reply, “Why Jesus?” but a true child of God would respond, “Yes, you're right! Jesus is the greatest, most glorious ideal. Blessed are those who take Jesus as their example in everything. He is the king of my heart—my joy and delight!”

Jesus is the only one who cannot ever disappoint me. No matter how closely I examine His life—from His birth to His death at the cross—it only becomes more and more apparent how precious and full a life He lived. Even though He was tempted, He did not let Himself be led astray. Although He loved everyone—ministering to all who were sad, depressed, or suffering—He also took action against those who deceived others with hypocritical piety. He tore the masks from their faces and revealed them for what they were. Jesus was not content with external piety but wanted instead to awaken something real and true in each and every one of us. He is and remains the best role model of all time. If you immerse yourself in His life, in His devotion and self-denial, you will receive a lasting blessing. You will be inspired to pursue all of the sublime virtues that distinguished Christ Himself. Your

entire character will be refined more and more, and your soul will come to be beautifully adorned.

If we look at people who model themselves on feeble, frail human beings, we see how they are largely left bitterly disappointed. When their ideals fall short of their expectations—and they virtually always do—bitter disappointment follows, and with it often a bitterness that penetrates their hearts and cleaves to their souls.

Many a young woman and many a young man, having ravenously devoured novel after novel depicting idealized “heroes” and “heroines,” has been deluded into seeing the world through dreamy eyes. Only when the reality of life reveals its true colors do these beguiled souls realize how false an ideal they have been pursuing, but at that point the damage can rarely be undone. Let us therefore see the world through clear eyes and not chase mirages.

Should children of God look up to people? Should they seek their ideal here? No, never! So many souls, having once found salvation, end up ensnared in the devil's traps once again. Why? Because they modelled themselves after man. And once they found that this was an imperfect individual, they fell into a spiritual crisis, which became a tool for Satan to mislead them.

Why do we see so many examples of weak, shallow Christianity? Only because most of the Christians in question are looking to man rather than Jesus. People are celebrated and revered, which is ultimately nothing but idolatry. This is often the case in Christian circles as well. May the Lord help us to become free of this false worship. It does not end well.

Take for example the nation of Israel. They had a great and glorious God who had liberated them from Egypt by His strong hand and performed great signs and miracles before their eyes. He had raised strong leaders who led the nation with wisdom and righteousness. However, this was not enough for the people. Ultimately, they wanted to have a king like the heathen nations did. This hurt Samuel's faithful soul bitterly, and he prayed to God, not knowing if he should fulfil the people's desire. But God said to him, "Heed the voice of the people . . . ; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them" (1 Samuel 8:7). The people's wish was granted, but they had to pay dearly, over and over again, for having chosen a human king.

Are there not still many today who desperately want a king just as the nation of Israel did? They are not content with the King and Savior Jesus Christ; no, they need to worship people. Let us become true worshippers of the Lord, looking up to Him and loving Him. He must be our king, our ruler, and our role model.

I am so thankful to my God for teaching me not to look to people in my walk with Jesus, but rather to keep my focus on Him. I might have long since fallen victim to Satan if I had set my eyes on human weakness and imperfection; but praise be to God that we have Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, Who helps us boldly bear everything: disappointment, pain, ridicule, misunderstanding. Despite how the situation may look from our imperfect human perspective, we have Him who gives us the grace of His marvelous Spirit so that we may carry the weak, love our brothers and sisters even when they hurt us, forgive them just as Christ forgave us, and not withdraw from their company. Show them that you have grace and that you love them, and you will see how their hearts are transformed by the spirit of love and how it will pain them to have misjudged you. Let yourself be led by the Spirit of God's mercy, and you will see how wonderful it is to allow Jesus, the true and loyal Son of God, to work within you.

If you want to be spared disappointment, model yourself after Jesus. Immerse yourself in His love, and you will not be able to help but return that love, even in situations in which it may feel difficult to do so. Jesus gives you strength and victory. May it be our prayer to become more like our Master and to surrender our hearts as fully as He did.

H. Schulz

Jesus, All in All

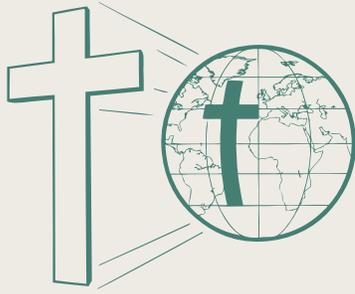
*You are the Light, which God has sent us,
You are the Word, our Sunshine clear;
Your impact on us is tremendous,
We see Your glory drawing near.
Oh may this Light of God, I pray,
Be the light upon my way!*

*You are the Power, which will not waver,
You are the precious Cornerstone;
The strength to do love's work and labor
Will come from knowing You alone.
Oh may this strength of God, I pray,
Be now my strength from day to day!*

*You are the love of God, which carried
All our transgression, guilt, and shame
When You were crucified and buried;
Oh Lamb of God, You rose again!
Oh may this love of God, I plead,
Be burning bright in me, indeed!*

*You are the Fountain which is flowing
Eternal life now to impart;
And all who drink, let them be showing
This love supreme that fills their hearts.
Oh may this fountain deep and wide
Be my portion deep inside.*

*You are the beauty of perfection,
More than the mind can comprehend;
Through the Father's deep affection
The Holy Spirit did descend;
Oh may God's glory fall on me
That I may always live for Thee!*



Radio Program Message of Salvation

Friedrich Krebs, Kitchener (ON)

This Jesus!

In the days following the Resurrection, Jesus still had many things to say to His disciples. Luke writes, “To whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God” (Acts 1:3). Then came the day when He ascended to His Father, and was physically separated from His disciples. It was for this purpose that He took them to the Mount of Olives. “Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven” (Luke 24:51).

The small group of disciples watched Him ascend, and in a few moments, they were alone. Suddenly two men, dressed in white, stood beside them and comforted them with these words: “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11).

Because Jesus ascended, did not mean that everything was over. His physical presence on earth was over, but He continues to reign and exist from the unseen world from which He had come.

When our employer leaves for a short time, we do not see him at work. This in no way means that he has ceased owning and governing his business.

Jesus had left His disciples, but He continued to be the focus of their message and lives. The disciples returned to Jerusalem just as Jesus had ordered, waiting for the day of Pentecost. With noticeable spiritual strength, they went to work spreading the Gospel of Christ. In Peter’s first sermon, he emphasized, “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36). Follow-

ing this, a question arose: “Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Men and brethren, what shall we do?’” (Acts 2:37)

The large group of listeners were noticeably stricken. Although “this Jesus” was not physically present, His life and work remained perceptibly in force among them. Listening to Peter’s sermon, some were certainly shaken. For others, it may have awakened confidence and hope. In any case, because of “this Jesus,” there was a tremendously broad impact on the world of that day and a visibly deep impact in many hearts.

It is profound and amazing when the word of Jesus goes “through” or “into” the heart of a person, when all his thinking and doing, his mind and his conscience are gripped and penetrated by it. That is the healing effect of the divine Word. And it can be for the benefit and blessing of each one of us.

A lasting, effective power emanates from “this Jesus.” And that is why it is so important that each one of us has a very personal and living relationship with Christ. But “what should we do?” was asked by many who were part of that large audience in Jerusalem. And that may also be the question that moves you today. This very question is already a decisive step towards Jesus.

This question has certainly come up for many. But many have switched it off again. “Let’s just admit it,” someone said, “we have often heard of Jesus. And we often heard His call to repentance. But then everything remained the same. It ran off us like water off a raincoat.”

There are two pictures in the Bible that depict the unresponsive human heart. In Ezekiel 36, the prophet speaks of a “heart of stone.” And in Psalm 119:70, we



read, “Their heart is as fat as grease.” Nothing can penetrate such “stony and fat hearts.” Neither those serious and powerful messages that fall on the listener like heavy hailstorms, nor even those words that fall on people like the dew of His goodness, can move such hearts. But the audience in Jerusalem had been cut through the heart. Oh, that the same could also be said about us!

The Holy Spirit works tirelessly by pointing out “this Jesus” and making Him glorious and great among us. And this happens so that you too should know and personally experience this Jesus. “What the world needs today is Jesus,” is how one song states it. Because the world does not want to recognize or accept this Jesus, it is heading toward terrible chaos.

This Jesus does not allow Himself to be switched off by our modern world. Through the message of the cross,

we still hear Him. Through the life and work of His true followers, He remains visible. He is the gift of God for a lost humanity. He reveals the true and eternal God and His healing and saving grace to all of us. It remains an irrefutable fact that all humanity has sinned and that because of sin, we have suffered a great fall and a painful separation from God. Through Christ, we can be reunited with God. He is the means to our deliverance and salvation. For this purpose He was given to us, and you need this Jesus as well.

God’s Word tells us, “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

This Jesus will come again for the final judgment. “And every eye will see Him” (Revelation 1:7), even those who did not want to see Him.



YOUTHPAGE

Relationship Killer

In 2007, Apple introduced the first iPhone—hour zero for the smartphone. It is estimated that in 2018, more than 5 billion people will own a smartphone. That means that over the course of 11 years, 1.245 million devices were sold each day. In 2017, it is said that approximately 97% of all youth in Germany aged 12-19 years owned their own device. Three years earlier, it was “only” 88% [98% of 18-24 year olds in the U.S. owned a smartphone in Q3 2016, Nielson].

As the smartphone enjoys a seemingly unstoppable penetration and enormous acceptance, its impact on society permeates nearly all areas of life. As most of us have probably experienced, these effects are not all positive—in fact, quite to the contrary. Meanwhile, medical professionals are warning, among other things, that there is potential for addiction to these devices and recommend conscious and mindful management of smartphones.

A new phenomenon, which never had a name until 2012, is the so-called “phubbing,” coined from the words “phone” and “snubbing” (treating someone disdainfully). It refers to reading and typing on your phone while you should be engaging in conversation with a person. Surely we have experienced this in our daily lives. As you are in the middle of a conversation with someone, their cell phone suddenly beeps or vibrates. Reflexively, they pull out their device and focus completely on it. At the same time, you are inevitably neglected. Marriage counselors are finding that the smartphone can be the starting point of many relationship problems. For example, answering your WhatsApp message during a conversation can be hurtful for your partner. While this doesn’t seem to be detrimental in an isolated incident, it can lead to a huge problem down the road.

Could this have happened to you recently, when God was trying to speak to you? As you were reading your Bible, your cell phone lying nearby suddenly vibrated. (Perhaps you only read the Bible on your phone, which in this case is truly not an advantage.) You quickly glanced at the display, and there was that message you had been waiting an hour for. You quickly formulated an answer and a minute later, you focused back on your Bible. “Now, where was I again?” “What was the thought I was contemplating?” And before you had a chance to get back into your study, your device was notifying you of a new message. Distracted again. Can you imagine what God’s thoughts are about this? What degree of focus are we giving God and His Word? Is it possible our smartphone is damaging our relationship with God?

In 2017, a comprehensive survey was conducted asking young people between the ages of 12 and 19 what their most important apps on their smartphone were. The answer was WhatsApp, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, and Facebook. These were the 5 choices most frequently named. Every one of these networks requires one thing: our attention—at any cost—even if your relationship with God or other people should suffer as a result.

Therefore, take this opportunity to examine your electronic usage behavior. Do you need to change anything? Start by putting your phone into airplane mode before you begin your devotions. You should do the same in a worship service or youth meeting. Make sure it is out of reach when you sit down to a meal with your family, or purposely leave it at home the next time you visit your grandparents. It certainly won’t damage your relationship with your companions. And then, when God has your full attention, He can show you things you won’t learn anywhere else!

Niko Ernst

Jesus Seeks Fruit

As Stanley Jones reported in his book, “Victorious Living,” the Japanese can control the growth of trees so that instead of becoming forest giants, they only reach the height of a potted plant. This is done by stopping the taproots. The tree can only feed itself through its surface roots, stunting its growth.

Is your spiritual life also stunted? Are you like the barren fig tree on which Jesus seeks fruit year after year? Do you only nurture yourself through superficial Christian activity? Do not be satisfied with that. Jesus wants to create the fruit of the Spirit in you, which you surely know from Galatians 5:22.

But perhaps a secret sin is gnawing at the taproot of your spiritual life? As long as you call the love of money “frugality” and the addiction to gossip “socially acceptable entertainment,” you will wither away. The taproot of your spiritual life is impeded. Instead of becoming a strong man, you remain a spiritual dwarf. Allow Jesus Christ to free you from all tethers and sins. Then your life will sink deeply into God. Then you are no longer shallow and will become fruitful for eternity. He will allow you to stand for another year. Jesus is still striving for you.

R. K.

... Notes from School (Part 7)

“Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass.” (Psalm 37:5)

I did not understand the world anymore—and I especially could not understand God. By now, I had reached the fourth semester and had a completely new experience: I had failed a midterm examination. This had never happened before, neither during my schooldays nor in the first semesters of my studies. I had always passed my exams, often quite well. And now this.

Furthermore, as a farewell gift from my piano teacher when I went to university, she had given me a special Bible verse on a card: “Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass.” I firmly believed this promise of God. And besides, I had learned in many situations that He had helped me wonderfully.

What was different now? I had told Him that this exam was now my way, I had believed Him—and yet I had failed. I tormented myself with this hardship for a few days—and simultaneously experienced many other things going wrong just then.

When I was finally ready, God opened my eyes and showed me that the verse had a completely different meaning. It’s not about God making sure my goals and plans work out smoothly. Rather, the verse means that when I entrust my future, my plans to Him, He will direct my desires and guide my ways according to His plan of success for me. I am very grateful to God for this lesson, which remains vividly in my mind still today. More than 10 years have passed since this experience—and God has always kept that promise. May He alone receive honor.

Patricia Günter

VERSE OF THE MONTH

“As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?” Psalm 42:1-2

Certainly, every one of us has experienced the feeling of thirst when the body longs for water. We usually look for the first opportunity to quench this thirst with pure water. Do you also know what it feels like when you must wait so long to receive a drink that you become weak and without strength? It is incredibly soothing when we can still our thirst with cool, refreshing water after a day of physical labor or a strenuous hike.

As the body needs water, so our soul needs fellowship with God. Often, however, the thirst of the soul is left unsatisfied as time with the Lord is neglected. Do you still have spiritual life in you, or has your soul perhaps been stunted? Do you still feel this thirst and longing after God? Then, continue to abide at the spring of living water. We gain access to the well through prayer and by reading our Bible.

God Can Help Without a Lie

During the horrific time of the French Revolution a girl from a noble family, whose parents and siblings had been murdered by a mob, found refuge with Pastor Oberlin in Steintal. But Emilie was not out of danger yet. Her escape became known. Her name was on the list of those who were sentenced to death, and the enemies of her father searched everywhere for her. As a result, she always had to stay inside the house. She couldn't even let herself be seen at a window. But what do human precautions matter?

Early one morning around six o'clock, Father Oberlin sat in the living room. Heavy knocking was heard at the door. Oberlin opened it and—imagine his shock—two police officers stepped in. “Pastor,” said the one sheepishly, for he had great respect for Oberlin. “Pastor, the court in Strasbourg received a letter stating that you are accused of hiding the daughter of an aristocrat and traitor in your home, who is sentenced to death for being an accomplice to her father. We have orders to search your house. Now, we do not gladly bring this dishonor upon you. We know, Pastor, that you never say untruths. Therefore, if you give us your word that you are not harboring such a person in your house, then we will believe you and leave immediately.”

Oberlin did not even think for a minute to save the life of his ward by a lie. Without letting the fear in his heart be noticed, he answered the police officers, “God forbid that you do not do your duties here because you like me, my friends. You have the order to search my house. So do it! Besides, people are always visiting me. Who knows if the person you're searching for is among them. Come, I will show you the way!”

Oberlin stood up and led the police officers through the house. He smiled in a friendly manner, but his heart cried out continually to God. At last, he came to the room where the young girl was staying. “This is the last room, my friends!” said Oberlin, opening the door widely.

The police officers became more sheepish the more Oberlin was friendly to them. One of them stepped on the threshold to the room, looked to the right and left and said, “Good. No one is here! Someone maligned you, Pastor. We politely ask your pardon for the disruption we caused. Farewell!” They went down the stairs and left the parsonage.

How did it happen that the policeman didn't see the girl? Had she left the room? She would have run right into the hands of the police! Or had she hidden herself somewhere in the room? How would she have thought of that when she was unaware of the danger she was in?

Emilie had washed her hands and was busy drying them on the towel that hung behind the door when, suddenly, footsteps sounded and the door was pushed open. Because she was still in her underskirt and was ashamed to be seen undressed, she ducked and remained quiet as a mouse behind the door and did not move until it closed again.

In such a natural and wonderful way, God saved her life once more and kept dear Pastor Oberlin's conscience from being burdened by a lie.

Soon after, Robespierre was overthrown, the laws of the Revolution were lifted, and the danger for Emilie was over. Because she no longer had a home, she lived in Oberlin's home until she married.



CHILDREN'S CORNER

Beautiful Hands

Mary Jo was her mother's helper. Mrs. Lee had often said she didn't see how she could ever get along without Mary Jo's eager, helpful hands.

One day Mary Jo came home from school with a troubled look on her face. Mother was busy as usual, but especially on this day, for Brother Rae, a returned missionary from Africa, was in their home for a few days.

"What is the matter with my little girl?" asked Mrs. Lee. "Has something gone wrong at school today?"

"It's about my hands, Mother," Mary Jo began timidly. "Some of the girls at school said mine were rough—and large. Eileen's are so small and soft as silk. Every one says she has beautiful hands."

Before Mother could comfort her, brother Rae appeared in the doorway. He had heard Mary Jo's complaint, and he called to her, "Come, let me tell you how you may have beautiful hands."

Mary Jo did not hesitate a moment to accept the invitation. Perhaps he could tell her how to have hands like Eileen's—soft as silk.

Soon they were seated in the living room of the Lee home. Brother Rae reached for the Bible and took it up reverently.

"God has many things to say in His Book about hands, Mary Jo," he began.

"In Isaiah 59:3 and Haggai 2:14, defiled or unclean hands are mentioned. Here the word 'hands' refers to the whole body as well as just the hands. Any one who has never received the Lord Jesus as Savior, and been washed in His precious Blood, is in His sight unclean and defiled. But Psalm 24:3–4, says, 'Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place? He that has clean hands, and a pure heart.'

"How, then, are unclean, defiled hands made clean and pure? This is the wonderful part, Mary Jo. God has provided a way. As we read on in this precious Book, we find the pierced hands of Someone—and that One is the Lord Jesus. His hands were pierced with cruel nails. When unclean hands are brought to the pierced ones of the Lord Jesus as the sinner asks to be forgiven, those defiled hands are made pure and clean.

"Have you ever received the Lord Jesus as your own Savior, Mary Jo?"

"Yes, I have, Brother Rae. I let Him come into my heart during Sunday School last Easter." Mary Jo's face shone with joy as without hesitation she told about when she had asked Jesus to save her.

"I'm so glad—I'm so glad, Mary Jo. I thought you had done so, but I wanted to be sure. Then your hands are clean hands in God's sight, no matter what the children at school say.

"They are holy hands, too, for God's Word speaks of hands that have been washed in the Blood of Jesus as 'holy' (1 Timothy 2:8). Pure, clean hands become useful hands, as they do kindnesses to other people for Jesus' sake. These are the hands that are beautiful in His sight, Mary Jo, and I'm glad that your hands are beautiful to Him. The Lord knows and remembers the many ways you serve Him with your hands here in your home. And surely you'll continue to do so!"

Brother Rae had hardly finished speaking when Mrs. Lee called, "Dinner!" It was a happy-faced Mary Jo who took her place at the table. Mother saw the change and smiled her thanks to Brother Rae, who started up the old song as they stood about the table: "Take my life and let it be Consecrated, Lord, to Thee; . . . Take my hands and let them move, at the impulse of Thy love." The Beautiful Way

What Are We Doing For Our Children's Salvation?

We live in a time where much attention is paid to quality education. Everyone around us is progressing and striving for the highest achievements. One recognizes only too well, if we want to raise educated people, then we need to start with our children. This is all very good and highly commendable. But as Christians, we should especially consider a much more important side in the lives of our young people.

We know that man has but one body and one soul. The natural man ceases at death, but the spiritual man, the soul, lives on through all eternity. Therefore, the spiritual is of greater importance. At the very least, the spiritual man should receive as much care and "education" as the natural one. Unfortunately, this is often overlooked, especially when it comes to our children. There is an effort to win adults to God, and young people who are already at a more mature age. But there is a particular deficiency in this regard with our children until about age 14. Children at this age have reached the age of reason, and know what is good and evil. This is well known to parents and Sunday School teachers. If children die at this age without first repenting, they are lost.

We do not want to set any rules for parenting here. Every child is hardwired differently, so it falls to the parents to get to know the child and then to educate to the best of their knowledge according to the guidelines that are shown to us in the Word of God. But parents should be seriously concerned about the salvation of their children.

Some time ago, a boy was suddenly called into eternity without warning. His parents were children of God. He himself went to Sunday School. But what about his soul? Sunday school and Bible classes do not give anyone forgiveness of sins, although they contribute to obtaining recognition of sin.

Such cases should give us a jolt and move us to sincerity for the salvation of our growing children. We neglect a lot if we fail to work on our children's hearts. Maybe we think children do not have a good understanding of spiritual things yet. Certainly they do not completely understand the importance of life. But their hearts are soft and receptive, both toward evil, as well as good. Therefore, we should take every opportunity to plant the good seed. Parents should not spare any effort to lead their children to God, not through excessive "preaching," but above all, through a life pleasing to God, and occasionally through words of exhortation, spoken in wisdom, and of surrender to the Lord.

It should also be the endeavor of Sunday School teachers to not only teach the children, but to also persuade their hearts to give themselves to the Lord. Much good has already come out of such persistent, solemn work. Today in our congregations, we have many young people who have gone from childhood to Sunday School and would not think of missing a service, but they have not personally experienced salvation. Why is that? May God help us see our duties and then prayerfully get to work.

The church also has its part to do. Children know if there is an interest in them or not. They feel with their young, tender hearts whether they are given a place or not, and whether an environment of trust has been established. It is not enough that the church provides a room for Sunday School lessons. It is the heartfelt concern for each one, especially for those who feel lonely and abandoned. We should consistently show them our love and pray for the salvation of their souls. Our conduct towards them will either drive them away or win them.

When a child expresses his desire to get closer to God, some people may unwisely say, "Oh, he is just a child." When a child hears this, he can be so discouraged that he will never seek God again. Let us therefore do our best to win our children for the Lord.

“Only a Child!”

In some rooms there may hang a picture: Jesus, the friend of children, with the meaningful words, “Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them” (Matthew 19:14). This should be the motto in every family: Our children for Jesus! But in many homes, this picture hangs only as a decoration. You may read the verse but do not understand that it is a serious warning to do your best to bring your children to Jesus. The point isn’t to read it absentmindedly; no, Jesus wants our children to come to Him.

Children are not a necessary evil. No, every child’s soul has measureless value. The Lord clearly says, “Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me” (Matthew 18:5). Never before has someone so emphatically shown humanity the worth of a child’s soul and thereby given such meaning to raising children as Jesus did.

“Only a child!” How varied these words can be spoken! “A child!” shouts a mother who accepts him as a gift from God. Children are a gift from God. In our modern, enlightened time, this is often disputed. But it remains true. How much would some fathers give to be able to have an heir! All riches and all happiness leave a bitter aftertaste—no heir! For whom does he work then?

“Only a child!” How contemptuously and disparagingly these words sound in the mouth of the world! In their eyes, a child is a being not worth their attention. How many children are killed today before they are born! What a dark chapter in humanity’s history! Only God knows what scenes will take place on Judgment Day when mothers must stand before the eternal Judge.

What does your child mean to you? Is she good for venting your bad mood and anger? Good for blaming him and pushing him around with impatience as if he were always in your way and robbing you of your life’s happiness?

Or is your child an object of constant fear and worry to you? Can you no longer truly find joy in your children because of many questions about the future and feeble

doubts? How many questions rise up in you: Will my child remain healthy? Will she develop well? Will he be raised well? Will there be enough money? Will she support me in my old age?—That is love but love without trusting in God.

Then there are families in which the children are their only pride. Among relatives and everyone else, the kids are only applauded and praised. These unfortunate children are robbed of a natural childhood because their parents lack impartiality and are too vain to recognize this.

“Only a child!” Like an unwritten page, pure and blameless, he is entrusted to his parents. And through his upbringing, the name of Jesus should be impressed upon him. Can there be a more wonderful responsibility for parents?

Jesus is the greatest expert in child-raising. To the disciples, it seemed that children were not worth the care of the Lord. But Jesus has time for children. Whoever wants to influence and attract children must have time for them. Moms, you must take time for your children. Take them on your lap and demonstrate genuine compassion for their little problems. Tell them about the Lord; teach them to fold their hands and pray. Dads, you must also take time for your children, to instruct them in the ways of the Lord.

Our children should sense our love and should know that their own well-being is more important to us than their outward appearance. God is an example to us by how He parented us. Spurgeon once said, “I confess that I owe more to the hammer, the anvil, the fire, and the forge than I do to anything else in the workshop of my Lord. I doubt at times that I could have learned anything without His rod.”

Parents, too, will not experience much good with their children if they will not discipline them. Much speaking and scolding is not very useful in raising children, but discipline resulting from careful thought and prayer works wonders.

“Only a child!” It is wonderful what God’s grace and a pious upbringing can make of children!

The Lord's Prayer

by Gerhard Mielke - Part 16: *Thine is the Glory*

The Lord's prayer ends with this proclamation: "Thine is the glory, forever." All other glory fades in the sight of God's glory, just like stars fade in the sky when the sun rises. We see the glory of God around us every day. Yet, from time to time God reveals His glory in special ways.

For example, in the Old Testament at the dedication of the temple we read:

"Indeed it came to pass, when the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the LORD, saying: 'For He is good, for His mercy endures forever,' that the house, the house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God" (2 Chronicles 5:13-14).

Thereafter Solomon blessed the people and prayed to the Lord God. Then we read:

"When Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the temple. And the priests could not enter the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD'S house. When all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD on the temple, they bowed their faces to the ground on the pavement, and worshiped and praised the LORD, saying: 'For He is good, for His mercy endures forever'" (2 Chronicles 7:1-3).

The priests could not stand before the glory of the Lord. God revealed His glory because He was pleased with His people. There were singers and musicians clothed in white linen, with cymbals, harps and stringed instruments, as well as 120 priests playing trumpets (2 Chronicles 5:12). If God honored the use of instruments

in His worship service back then, I am sure He is pleased when His people praise Him with instruments even in the church today, in order to proclaim His praises. It is not the outward proclamation in isolation that pleases God, but the right condition and attitude of the heart.

Another time God showed His glory was when He revealed Himself to Isaiah (Isaiah 6:1-9). When Isaiah saw the holiness of God and confessed his own sin, he was told: "Behold, this has touched your lips; Your iniquity is taken away, And your sin purged." When we experience the glory of the Lord we are in awe of God's holiness and recognize our own sinfulness. We see that we cannot stand before a holy God. It is in that moment, if we confess our sinfulness, that God is able to take away the iniquity and purge the sin.

Christ is the Glory of God

In the New Testament, God revealed His glory through Jesus Christ. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

Jesus does not just intercede for us to grant us pardon (Hebrews 7:25), but He also died for us and took our sins upon Himself in order to make that pardon possible. He is "The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29).

Holiness and glory go together. You cannot stand before a holy God. But as you realize this and see His glory, you are made holy by God, as you confess your sins. God says "be holy because I am holy" (1 Peter 1:16). Since we cannot do this ourselves, God makes us holy through Christ. Then Christ entreats us to go and sin no more (John 5:14, 8:11).

Christ is the glory of God. The book of Hebrews verifies this.



“God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Hebrews 1:1-3).

In 1 Corinthians 2:8 Christ is called the Lord of Glory. One of the ways Jesus revealed His glory was through the miracles He performed. To Martha He said: “Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?” (John 11:39-40).

His glory will again be revealed to all at His second coming.

Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (Matthew 24:30).

Glory and Suffering

Although it may seem paradoxical to many, God’s glory is often revealed through suffering. Jesus showed us first hand that the way to glory often goes through great suffering. To the disciples on the way to Emmaus he said:

“O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory? (Luke 24:25-26).

Also, when Stephen died as a martyr, he saw the glory of the Lord. We read:

“When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with their teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw

the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God” (Acts 7:54-55).

The passion to do God’s will enables His children to not shy away from suffering. Indeed when the saints in Caesarea wanted to dissuade Paul from going to Jerusalem, he answered:

“What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 21:13).

In his letter to the Corinthians he says:

“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (2 Corinthians 4:17).

We are to glorify God

Christ is the glory of God, but we as the church are called the body of Christ. If we are His body, then it should be our aim to live for His glory. That is our purpose. Ephesians 1:12 verifies this: “that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.”

Paul writes: “Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31).

On earth we already have a foretaste of the glory of God, yet the glory which shall be revealed to us is much greater. Paul says: “If indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Romans 8:17b-18). In Revelation 22:1-5, John describes our future home in picture language. Our human understanding cannot grasp what this glory will really be like but it is waiting and yet to come for all who love the Lord and remain true to Him. To God be the glory. Let us live to His glory!

Bitter Blessings

After His baptism, Jesus went to the wilderness and was alone for forty days. There He was tempted by the devil. There was no encouragement, no word of comfort. All alone, He had to battle with these temptations. In the writings of the apostles, one point stands out: “Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil” (Matthew 4:1), and Mark states in chapter 1 verse 12, “Immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness.”

God’s intention was that Jesus was to endure all of this. He was to glean particular experience. His human nature had to be tested. He alone was to overpower these temptations, as the Holy Spirit led Him. For us, this is significant, for it sheds light upon unexplainable circumstances in our lives.

Have you ever been in a situation you did not understand and from which you could see no way out? You may have encountered something new that frightened you. In your time of need, you called on your friends for help. However, they were unfamiliar with this type of situation, and their well-meaning advice may have confused you more. Days went by, but no change occurred; your path became darker. Two questions occupied you constantly: What does this mean? Why did this happen? Nevertheless, you could find no answer. Your ability to pray seemed to be gone. Yes, sometimes we have battles in our souls that we do not understand.

If we are so burdened and downtrodden, then our heart yearns for someone who understands us and can help us. However, it is all in vain. We must go it alone. Pain and worries depress our heart and, with a drooping head, we are bereft. Such as if one of our loved ones dies, and no one can carry the pain for us.

When Abraham was to bring the great sacrifice on Mount Moriah, he took his son and went up unattended. But there was no visible splendor of God as there had been for Moses on Mount Horeb. Abraham’s trust in God alone gave him his steadfastness, and he did not sway

nor hesitate. No one could help him or take this difficult test from him. But he showed himself to be brave, and emerged stronger and better than before.

Dear friend, should you experience all these things, do not be discouraged. Millions of God’s children have travelled this rough road and crossed through this valley. Put all your self-accusations aside. You would not condemn Christ for the sake of His temptations that He experienced in the wilderness. Why would you then want to fault yourself? Is it not possible that the Holy Spirit may have led you during these temptations? Is it possible that you are to be purified through these trials because of God’s will?

When you have steadfastly tolerated all these sufferings, even without understanding everything, and your tears and prayers appear in vain, you wonder how this will end. Should you, like Abraham, let God change your name, and give you a better one, and draw you closer to Him? He certainly knows the heat of your pains and distress. Even so, He allowed all this to happen to you. The one and only beloved Son of the heavenly Father had to go out into the wilderness. He does not love you less, and that is why He sometimes leads you into “the wilderness.” It is not for the sake of suffering, because He looks beyond these hard times to the results or fruit of the suffering.

This ability to foresee the outcome impels our heavenly Father to allow His dear child to suffer pain, loneliness, and grief, so that His child acquires strength, courage, belief, and an enlarged soul. Pain furthers deep communion, and sadness greater compassion. Both soften the will and the human heart so that His child then becomes totally submissive to God and becomes more like Him.

Of course, at times we must seemingly travel alone through our suffering. Those are the times in which God chooses not to intervene, because He does not want to rob you of the fruits of this experience. Christ could not be spared the cross, and you are to carry it as well. He

drank the bitter cup of suffering and obeyed till death, so that we may have life.

Therefore, during our trials and tribulations let us not become discouraged, but faithfully carry on. Be faithful no matter how sad your future looks and no matter the feelings you might be experiencing; hold fast to God. Travel the narrow way without worrying about the length

and strength of the temptations. After many years, you will see those dark times as the most blessed of your life. Then, no matter how bitter those temptations may be, sweetness and joy will follow, which you would not have experienced any other way. Be faithful and trust your Lord whatever may come your way. You are to mirror the heavenly image of your godly Savior. R.

Make Use of Your Vacation!

“Make use of your vacation; the whole world is open to you,” I read in the display window of a travel bureau. Next to it hung colorful posters of Greece, Romania, the USA, and Spain.

It is true that we have very different opportunities available to us than our grandparents had. They spent their vacations at home, or sometimes with relatives in the countryside. Vacation wasn't the focus of their year like it is for us. It is usually the most significant break for us in the course of a year. For this reason, it is important to prepare our vacation carefully and to reflect quietly on the goal and purpose of it.

Traveling, yes—but how?

Perhaps the beginning of travel was pilgrimages. People made their way—alone or in a group—to worship at holy places. So pilgrims traveled in times long ago. Today, they still make pilgrimages to monasteries and temples in Europe, as well as India and Burma and other places.

Do you know that the soul withers when it is not nourished by spiritual sources? Do you search for stillness at least once a year and consciously detach yourself from the fast pace of our time?

Until the Middle Ages, European Christianity knew of the importance and deep meaning of stillness and stopping to worship and to care for one's soul. Then this knowledge was lost to a degree as people established themselves more domestically. Discoveries and inventions took minds captive. The words from the Bible, “For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?” often get moved to the back of our minds.

Vacation should include stillness

What would happen on our vacation if we didn't just

associate its purpose with recuperating and seeing new things? Being still is part of a vacation. Only then will we find ourselves—and find God. Then our vacation will truly be successful, when we really look at the scenery, the forests, mountains, and grass, when we read the Bible and take the time to meditate on what we read, when we investigate the things that form and define our lives.

There is often much that remains unfinished. Do you believe our souls relish continually being left in the dark, unable to get “fresh air”?

A travel writer tells this story: “After a strenuous, several days long march, the indigenous people who accompanied me as porters, went on strike. They sat themselves down on the edge of the forest and were not persuaded to continue to walk for any price. Raising their daily wages, increasing their ration of meat, pleas, accusations—nothing helped. Finally they came out with the reason for their strange behavior: they alleged that their souls couldn't keep up with the pace of the march. Therefore, they wanted to wait until their souls “had caught up again.”

These people probably understood more about psychology than most of us. Have our souls also been unable to keep up because of the rapid development of the economy? Can our vacation this year be a time for us to wait for “our souls to catch up”? We don't just need sun. We need the “Son of Righteousness” for a true, restful vacation.

We want to look at the beauty of nature: the forests, mountains, flowers, grasses, seas. But we also want to see Him who is more beautiful than everything combined: Jesus Christ, God's Son. If we do that, not only will the world be open to us, but also heaven.

The Other Doctor

As he was running home after school, a boy fell and grazed his left knee. Only a scratch could be seen. His pants had not ripped. But in the night, his knee began to hurt. “That can’t mean anything,” thought the 13-year old farmer’s son. Ignoring the pain, he knelt down to pray and then slipped into the room where he and his five brothers slept and went to bed.

His leg hurt even more the next morning. But he still didn’t tell anyone about it. The farm kept all family members very busy. Every morning, the boy had to get up at six o’clock to do his chores before school. They had to be done well.

Two days later, his leg hurt so badly that he walked with difficulty. It was Sunday, and he was able to rest until his brothers returned from Sunday School in the town. Around noon when his parents returned from church, he was in bed. His shoe had to be cut off from his swollen leg. Why hadn’t he told anyone?

Immediately, the doctor was called. His mother bathed his knee and foot and wiped the sweat from the boy’s brow. She remained calm despite everything. She had proven herself a good caregiver during many illnesses. She had lost one son, but that made her all the more calm and determined when she had to fight for her other children.

The doctor examined his leg and then said quietly: “We can hardly save it!”—The patient sat up and asked, “What does that mean?”

“It means,” the doctor explained very seriously, “that if it gets any worse, we will have to amputate your leg.”—“Never!” the boy protested. “I would rather die!”

“The longer we wait, the more of your leg we’ll have to amputate,” said the doctor. “You will absolutely not amputate anything!” The boy’s voice sounded firm and determined, like that of an adult, and he gave the doctor a sharp look.

The doctor left the room, intending for the parents to follow him. While they still talked together, they heard how the patient called for his brother. “Edi, Ed, come up to me!” Then he told him, “Ed, promise me that they will not be allowed to amputate my leg. Promise me!”

In the next minute, Ed ran to the kitchen. When he came back, his mother asked him, “Ed, what did your

brother want?”—“A fork to bite on so that he doesn’t scream aloud.”

Then Ed stood in front of the bedroom to guard the entrance. He looked firmly at the older doctor and said, “No one will amputate his leg!”—“But Ed, you will regret it,” said the doctor, dismayed.—“That may be, but I promised him!”

If Ed hadn’t persisted, then Father and Mother would probably have agreed immediately. But they themselves were not yet convinced that an amputation was necessary.—“We will see how it looks tonight,” Father suggested.

For two days and two nights, Ed stayed on the doorstep, leaving only to eat or sleep. The suffering, sick boy talked in his fever. His leg became even more colored. But Ed remained unwavering. His parents knew that their son would never forgive them for amputating his leg. Every time the doctor came, Ed persisted, until the doctor suddenly cried out, “This is murder!” and slammed the house door. Only a miracle could save the boy.

The parents and brothers felt the same way. Had they forgotten their faith in their fear? In this distressing situation, they knelt down along the edge of the bed and prayed, taking turns—Father, Mother, Ed—and in between, they did their work, returning again to pray. During the second night, the other four brothers also knelt down along the bed from time to time in order to pray with them.

The next morning, the doctor came again. His experienced eye noticed a sign of improvement. The swelling had gone down! Everyone was relieved by this news. But they continued praying. Every day, his recovery improved until the fever disappeared and the pain stopped. The boy and his leg were saved. From the depths of their hearts, the entire family thanked God for this wonder of answered prayer.

After some time, Dwight was able to run around with his brothers again, go to school, and do his chores. He never forgot how Someone else had become his doctor and helped him.

A true event from the teenage years of Dwight D. Eisenhower, President of the United States.

E. J. D.

Announcements

*Camp Meeting in Blaubeuren,
Germany
August 4-11, 2018*

*Special Services in Swartz Creek, MI
September 1-2, 2018*

*Edmonton Fest
October 6-8, 2018*

Learn To Be Thankful

When God in His wisdom puts us on a sickbed for a sustained time, then He is placing us into a special class in His school. Isolated from the things happening in the world, we live within a confined circle of our room. Everything looks different now. We are interested in the little things of life that we normally pay little attention to.

We notice the way the sun's rays shine through our window every day. In awe, we notice the hidden beauty of a simple flower that someone brought us. The decorative verse on the wall, which we usually overlook, has a significant impact on us. Looking away from the things around us, we notice the people in our surroundings, the large amount of work we create for them, their patience, love, and daily effort. Out of these observations, a feeling of thankfulness arises that we have it so undeservedly good.

And this thankfulness, which we might be realizing for the first time in our lives, we want to faithfully nurture, yes, rightly learn. We now have so much op-

portunity to do so. We will soon notice that joy blooms from thankfulness. Then the rays of sunshine that peek through the window will bring us a double joy when we thankfully acknowledge them. The flower will smell even sweeter when in it we see the gracious Creator and thank Him for it. There is a whole stepladder of thankfulness, from the smallest to the greatest things.

How much easier will we be able to carry the ailments of our sickness if we first thank God from our hearts for every little bit of relief! If we practice this thankfulness daily, then we will be thankful to God, Who has so graciously taken us into His school to teach us about His mercy and faithfulness, His tender care, and His unending love. And so we want to diligently learn the blessed lesson of thankfulness until the Master can place us into a different classroom and free our chains—whether it be for earthly tasks or for eternity.

G. T.

Jesus Alone

*If all that surrounds me is dismal and dark,
The sunshine of heaven remains as a spark;
For Jesus, my Savior, is my light
That kindles my joy, though it be night.*

*If dark clouds are distant, or gathering near,
My hope remains constant, through turmoil and fear;
My Jesus, my sunshine, whatever my plight,
Will turn all the darkness and gloom into light.*

*If inclement weather and cold winds descend,
The trees lose their leaves, and the warm seasons end;
My Jesus remains, solid Rock, come what may,
My spring in the desert, my Helper each day.*

*And when life has ended, the last song is sung,
My soul flies to heaven, my labor is done;
Then Jesus, my Jesus, the One I adore
Will still be my glory, my joy evermore.*

Gertrud Tarutis